THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The expert group has given its recommendations to support four bio-tech parks on technical grounds. The details of the four projects recommended by the Expert Group are: establishing bio-tech incubation centre and common instrumentation facilities by Karnataka at Bangalore; setting up of bio-processing and scale up facility, micro-propogation facility, plant extraction facility, analytical laboratory facility and utility support and design engineering and project supervision by Kerala at Kochi; creating common extraction facility for medicinal and aromatic plants and agro/food testing and certification facility by Punjab at Chandigarh and setting up of tissue culture hardening facilities, cultivation of temperate aromatic plants using bio-technological interventions, pilot cultivation of selected high value medicinal plants and post-harvest management and technology aided food processing by Himachal Pradesh at Solan.

(c) and (d) No proposal is pending with the Central Government.

(e) and (f) Proposals received from the States like Tamil Nadu and Haryana were not recommended by the Expert Group for want of focused objectives and linkages with academic institutions and industries of the region.

(g) The level of funding for these proposals would be based upon the approval of Planning Commission and availability of funds.

Testing of Chemical Weapons

802. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Institute of Chemical Technology, Hyderabad, is in a position to develop soon the facilities to test chemical weapons in India in its laboratories; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and present status of creation of these facilities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) and (b) No, Sir. IICT, Hyderabad is not creating any facilities to test chemical weapons in India. However,

IICT has been participating in the proficiency tests, conducted by the organization for prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Netherlands to get the designation status, so that the chemicals in trace levels covered under chemical weapons convention can also be analyzed.

Progress under Jai Vigyan Scheme

803. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of progress made so far by the Department of Science and Technology under the National Jai Vigyan Science and Technology Mission;

(b) the details of progress made on new generation of vaccines specially with regards to HIV/AIDS, which has become a great menace to our Nation and the entire World;

(c) whether Government would assure of releasing more funds to expand the research projects concerning early solutions in patenting new generation vaccines expeditiously for HIV/AIDS;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Department of Science and Technology is implementing four Jai Vigyan National Science and Technology Missions. The progress is as follows:

i. Mission for Visually Impaired

A LPG stove has been successfully designed and demonstrated which helps the blind towards understanding the position of hands in the 3D space in relation to the burner and knob position. It has a provision for auto ignition of burners.

A manually operated machine has been developed for printing different types of maps for visually impaired. Semi-automatic screen printing machine is being developed in order to improve the quality of maps and printing in larger formats.